

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) A laser means as in claim 42, wherein said second cylindrical lens (16c) collimates said beam 7(b) into a collimated beam (7c) in a second plane perpendicular to the first plane.

7. (Previously Presented) A laser means as in claim 6, wherein said second cylindrical lens (16c) directs a plurality of said collimated beams (7c) to substantially a same spot (14).

8. (Previously Presented) A Laser means as in claim 40, wherein said diode pumping array (1) is held by a diode array mount (3) and wherein said optical means comprises adjusting means (110) for adjusting the axis of the pump light beam (7) to a defined plane relative to the diode array mount (3), which adjusting means includes at least one wedged window (27, 127).

9. (Withdrawn) A Laser means as in claim 8, wherein
said diode array (1),
said diode array mount (3)
said first cylindrical lens (2) is positioned nearby the diode array (1), preferably at the diode array mount (3), and
said adjusting means (110)
are fixed to a laser system base (28).

10. (Withdrawn) A Laser means as in claim 9 wherein said adjusting means (110) further comprises at least one parallel window.

11. (Withdrawn) A Laser means as in claim 10 further comprising a mounting frame (111) for holding said diode array mount (3) and said at least one parallel window wherein said mounting frame (111) has a contact plane for fixing said mounting frame (111) to said laser system base (28).

12. (Withdrawn) A Laser means as in claim 11 wherein said pumping device mounting frame (111) has a side wall with an opening at which said at least one parallel window is arranged.

13. (Withdrawn) A Laser means as in claim 11 wherein the pumping device mounting frame (111) comprises three horizontal positioning areas (115) and preferably three vertical positioning areas (116) for mounting diode array pumping device (103) at the laser system base (28) in a defined position.

14. (Previously Presented) A Laser means as claim 40, wherein said optical means comprises:

- a second lens (16a) for collimating said partial beam in the vertical and in the horizontal plane and directing it to said spot, which second lens is positioned at a distance away from the diode pumping array corresponding to the focal length of the second lens;

- a second cylindrical lens (17) positioned at a distance away from the diode pumping array corresponding to the sum of the focal length of the second cylindrical lens and of twice the focal length of the second lens; and

- a focusing lens (18) for collimating said partial beam in a first plane and for focusing the pump light beam in a second plane perpendicular to the first plane.

15. (Previously Presented) A Laser means as in claim 40 wherein said diode pumping array (1) comprises a laser diode bar (1c) generating said partial beams which are combined to a pump light beam (7).

16. (Previously Presented) A Laser means as in claim 40 with an aspect ratio for the pump beam (7) of $>15:1$.

17. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser operating in the fundamental mode, comprising

- a laser means according to claim 40 and
- a solid state laser medium (4) which is excited by said laser means.

18. (Original) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17, characterized in that the cross-section of said elliptical beam spot has an aspect ratio of $>3:1$.

19. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17, characterized in that the thermal profile of the laser medium is smooth and enables fundamental mode laser operation.

20. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17, wherein the laser mode is strongly elliptical within said laser medium (4).

21. (Original) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 20 characterized in that the aspect ratio for the laser mode is $>5:1$.

22. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17 comprising cavity-forming means, whereby a reflective cavity element closest to an entrance face of said laser medium is not in direct contact with said entrance face.

23. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17, wherein the axis of said pump beam is positioned obliquely or even vertically to the axis of the laser mode.

24. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17, wherein said laser medium (4) comprises Nd:Vanadate.

25. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 17 with a semiconductor saturable absorber (22) for obtaining a stable modelocked average output power of several Watts.

26. (Original) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 25, where stable modelocked operation is obtained at a pulse energy density on the semiconductor saturable absorber (22) which is lower than 10 times the saturation energy density of said semiconductor saturable absorber (22).

27. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser as in claim 25, where stable modelocked operation is obtained at a pulse energy density on the semiconductor saturable absorber (22) which is lower than 0.5 mJ/cm^2 .

28. (Previously Presented) A diode-pumped Laser with a laser means as in claim 42, comprising a single-pass or multi-pass amplifier or regenerative amplifier setup for generating micro-Joule- or milli-Joule-level laser pulse energies.

29. (Previously Presented) A solid state laser medium (4) excited by a laser means according to claim 40 which is partly supported in at least two first regions (11a, 11b) contacting thermally conducting material (12), and with at least two second regions adjacent to said first regions (11a, 11b), the surface of said second regions contacting material (13) with low thermally conductivity.

30. (Original) A solid state laser medium (4) according to claim 29 wherein the contact to said thermally conducting material (12) is enhanced by a contacting medium.

31. (Original) A solid state laser medium (4) according to claim 30 wherein said contacting medium is indium or thermally conducting glue.

32. (Previously Presented) A solid state laser medium (4) according to claim 29, wherein the heat flow from the laser medium (4) substantially has an one-dimensionality.

33-39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A Laser means for producing an essentially round or elliptical beam spot, comprising:

a diode pumping array (1) with a plurality of emitters, wherein at least two of the emitters, each emitting a partial beam, are mounted in a horizontal array; and

optical means for producing a pump beam (7) by imaging each single emitter into a same spot (6), wherein said optical means further includes

- an upstream optical means to collimate ~~a vertical axis of said partial beam in~~ a vertical plane, and

- a downstream optical means to collimate said partial beam in a horizontal plane, focus said partial beam in ~~at the~~ the vertical plane, and direct it to said spot (6), whereby the images of said emitters in said spot (6) form a smooth spot by an overlap of said images in a sense that if some of said emitters die or degrade, said spot will not substantially change its intensity pattern.

41. (Currently Amended) A Laser means for producing an essentially round or elliptical beam spot, comprising:

a pumping array (1) with a plurality of emitters wherein at least two of the emitters, each emitting a partial beam, are mounted on a horizontal array; and

optical means for producing a pump beam (7) by ~~imaging each single emitter~~ with directing each partial beam to a same spot (6) as a partial beam that is collimated in at least one plane, wherein the optical means further includes

- a first cylindrical lens (2) for collimating the strongly divergent pump light of said partial beam, wherein said first cylindrical lens (2) is positioned nearby said emitters (1) at a distance corresponding to the focal length of the first cylindrical lens (2); and

- a first lens (5) for collimating said partial beam in a horizontal plane and focusing said partial beam in a vertical plane and directing it to said spot (6), wherein said first lens (5) is positioned at a distance away from the diode pumping array (1) corresponding to the focal length of the first lens (5).

42. (Currently Amended) A Laser means for producing an essentially round or elliptical beam spot, comprising:

a diode pumping array (1) with a plurality of emitters, wherein at least two of the emitters, each emitting a partial beam, are mounted in a horizontal array; and

optical means for producing a pump beam (7) by ~~imaging each single emitter~~ intodirecting each partial beam to a same spot (6) as a partial beam that is collimated in at least one plane, wherein said optical means includes

- a first cylindrical lens (2) for collimating a strongly divergent emission of an emitter into a beam (7b) in a first plane, wherein said first cylindrical lens (2) is positioned near the diode array (1a) at a distance corresponding to the focal length of the first cylindrical lens (2), and

- a second cylindrical lens (16c) for collimating said beam (7b) wherein said second cylindrical lens (16c) is positioned at a distance from the diode pumping array (1a) corresponding to the focal length of the second cylindrical lens (16c).